



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 20, 2013

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RIDLEY-THOMAS CALLS ON BOYCOTT OF FLORIDA, ANNOUNCES A DAY OF DIALOGUE IN LOS ANGELES

As thousands of Americans expressed their outrage, sadness and disbelief at rallies around the country honoring Trayvon Martin on Saturday, Los Angeles County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas called for a boycott of Florida, a Day of Dialogue in Los Angeles to discuss the treatment of young black men by the justice system and reiterated his request that the Department of Justice look into a federal civil rights investigation of Martin's death.

Days of Dialogue is a nonprofit organization that works with various host organizations to design and conduct dialogues on sensitive or contentious topics. Founded in 1995, after the controversial verdict in the O.J. Simpson trial, Days of Dialogue has hosted a variety of meetings on issues like gun violence and immigration and economic opportunity.

"The dialogues are effective methods for engaging individuals to discuss their feelings in a constructive manner," said Ridley-Thomas. "The setting compels thoughtful expression of varying viewpoints and listening to those views."

A training will be facilitated by the Institute for Nonviolence in Los Angeles and Days of Dialogue on Wednesday, July 24 and Thursday, July 25, at the California Endowment.

Young people and adults are encouraged to attend this training. The training, which is also supported by the City of Los Angeles' mayor Eric Garcetti and Supervisor Ridley-Thomas, will include information about scheduled dialogue sessions throughout the region, which will begin on Saturday, July 27, 2013.

In addition, Supervisor Ridley-Thomas called for a national boycott of Florida to send a strong message against the state's "stand your ground" law.

"Florida has a robust tourism industry that brought in \$71.8 billion and attracted 91.4 million visitors last year," he said. "But until Florida is free of these dangerous and unproductive laws that allow innocent young men to be shot to death with impunity, it is in our best interest to hold the state's leadership accountable. We must act with our pocketbook—and that is quite significant."

On Tuesday, Ridley-Thomas sent a letter to Attorney General Eric Holder asking that the Justice Department do what the Florida court did not do and address the issue of race and the role that it played in the wrongful death of Trayvon Martin.

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